Government's Package for Devolution of Power to Tamils in Sri Lanka

1302. SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have worked out and presented to Sri Lankan Government a fresh package for devolution of powers for the Tamil Community in Sri Lanka;

(b) if so, how far it is in accordance with the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord, and suited to address the legitimate aspirations of Tamils in Sri Lanka indicating details of the new package; and

(c) what is the response of Sri Lankan Government and the Tamil representatives in Sri Lanka thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Solution for Sri Lankan Tamil Problem

1303. SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have come round to the US-view that any solution to the Tamil issue had to be within the bounds of a united Sri Lanka; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken by Government to resolve the ethnic Tamil-issue in Sri Lanka, singly or jointly with other powers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) and (b) The Government has consistently adhered to a policy involving a three-fold commitment:

* to the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka;
* to the restoration of lasting peace in Sri Lanka;
* to a peaceful, political process being the only means of achieving a lasting peace, through a negotiated settlement which would meet the aspirations of all communities.

The Government's stand is well known and is appreciated and shared by the international community.